

**JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE  
TENTH CIRCUIT**

IN RE: COMPLAINT UNDER THE  
JUDICIAL CONDUCT AND  
DISABILITY ACT

Nos. 10-15-90020 & 10-15-90021

Before **BRISCOE**, Chief Judge

**ORDER**

Complainant has filed a complaint of judicial misconduct against a district judge and a magistrate judge in this circuit. My consideration of this complaint is governed by 1) the misconduct rules issued by the Judicial Conference of the United States, entitled *Rules for Judicial-Conduct and Judicial-Disability Proceedings* (the “JCD Rules”); 2) the federal statute dealing with judicial misconduct, 28 U.S.C. § 351 *et seq.*; and 3) the “Breyer Report,” a study by the Judicial Conduct and Disability Act Study Committee, headed by Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, entitled *Implementation of the Judicial Conduct and Disability Act of 1980*. The Breyer Report may be found at: <http://www.supremecourt.gov/publicinfo/breyercommitteereport.pdf>. To the extent that there are any relevant prior decisions of the full Judicial Council of this circuit which are consistent with those authorities, they may also govern my consideration of this complaint.

The JCD Rules and this circuit's local misconduct rules are available to complainants on the Tenth Circuit's web page at: <http://www.ca10.uscourts.gov/ce/misconduct>. Paper copies are also furnished by the Circuit Executive's Office upon request. In accordance with those rules, the names of the complainant and subject judges shall not be disclosed in this order. *See* JCD Rule 11(g)(2).

Complainant alleges a district and magistrate judge engaged in misconduct while presiding over his civil rights case. Specifically, complainant asserts that the judges contravened federal rules by issuing orders *sua sponte*. Further, complainant contends the district judge improperly referred orders to the magistrate judge and denied complainant's motions for disqualification and recusal. Complainant also alleges the magistrate judge heard motions for which the judge lacked jurisdiction. These claims are not cognizable as misconduct because they are "directly related to the merits of a decision or procedural ruling." JCD Rule 11(c)(1)(B). As explained in the Breyer Report, this exclusion of matters related to the merits of underlying cases protects the independence of the judges deciding those cases. *See* Breyer Report, App. E., ¶ 2.

Complainant also alleges the judges conspired to assign themselves to his case, circumventing random case assignment. Further, complainant contends that both judges were racially motivated in ruling against him. While allegations of conspiracy and bias can state valid claims of misconduct even when the claims relate to a judge's ruling, *see* Commentary to JCD Rule 3, these claims fail because they are completely unsupported. The Rules require complainants to support their allegations with "sufficient evidence to raise an inference that misconduct has occurred." *See* JCD Rule 11(c)(1)(D). Although

complainant references a case in which the subject district judge granted, rather than denied, a white plaintiff's motion, complainant's reference is not enough to support an inference that the judges were racially motivated in ruling against him.

Accordingly, this complaint is dismissed pursuant to JCD Rule 11(c). The Circuit Executive is directed to transmit this order to complainant and copies to the subject judges and the Judicial Conference Committee on Judicial Conduct and Disability. *See* JCD Rule 11(g)(2). To seek review of this order, complainant must file a petition for review by the Judicial Council. The requirements for filing a petition for review are set out in JCD Rule 18(b). The petition must be filed with the Office of the Circuit Executive within 35 days of the date of the letter transmitting this order. *Id.*

So ordered this 24th day of September, 2015.

/s/ Mary Beck Briscoe

Honorable Mary Beck Briscoe  
Chief Circuit Judge